

Some Enduring Resources

My last input here has to do with resources. I don't intend them to be exhaustive. These resources are helpful in your ongoing pursuit of change into Christ likeness, though I am not suggesting that everything listed is necessarily without defect. There is only one reading source I know to be impeccable. The list, together with a short summary, is provided by my wife, Diane and me, together with the efforts of our friends and colleagues in the gospel, Pastor Dan and Charlotte Bunge. The summaries come largely from the aforementioned and some from published briefs. Several of these materials have made an impact on me in a way that has helped strengthen my pursuit of God by seeing life's struggles more clearly through a biblical lens.

Adams, Jay. *Christ and Your Problems*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing.

Do you have problems that seem too great to bear? Do you wonder if there is any way out of the mess you are in? This helpful booklet was written to put such problem cases into perspective, showing first that no one's problems are unique. Jay Adams offers genuine hope based on God's promise in First Corinthians 10:13. Readers will gain the courage needed to take responsible action, knowing that a real solution is to be found in God's way.

---. *The Christian Counselor's Manual*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1973.

This book deals with nouthetic counseling and addresses such things as presuppositions and principles, the practice and the process. This is a good reference book and it a must-have for any biblical counselor.

---. *Competent to Counsel*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1972.

Dr. Adams laid the basis for the reemergence of biblical counseling (nouthetic counseling). He sets the case for using biblical principles versus psychoanalysis in counseling Christians. Using biblically directed discussion, nouthetic counseling works by means of the Holy Spirit to bring about change in the personality and behavior of the counselee. Says Adams, "There have been dramatic results ... not only have people's immediate problems been resolved, but there have also been solutions to all sorts of long-term problems as well."

---. *From Forgiveness to Forgiving*, Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1994.

When you've been wronged, the best thing to do is forgive and forget, right? That's what many Christians believe, but is it biblical? Adams dispels misconceptions about forgiveness, reveals God's true plan for absolution, and shows you how to apply it to your own relationships. Learn how to forgive and forget God's way.

---. *Godliness Through Discipline*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing.

Here is a practical booklet for anyone who wants to become a godlier person. In it, Adams shows clearly that, while there is no such thing as instant godliness, genuine and lasting holiness is indeed possible. Beginning with Paul's instruction in First Timothy 4:7, "You must discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness," Adams explains how godly living can become second nature for the person who truly desires to be Christ like.

Anyabwile, Thabiti. *What Is a Healthy Church Member?* Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008.

This little gem is a Nine Marks book and a solid biblical summary on New Testament church membership; an inspirational book for serious Christian soldiers.

Berg, Jim. *Changed into His Image: God's Plan for Transforming Your Life*, Greenville, SC: BJU Press.

Berg has written a very sound and practical book on understanding biblical change. The subtitle, *God's Plan for Changing Your Life*, expresses well the content of this excellent study.

Biblical Counseling Foundation. *Self-Confrontation: A Manual for In-Depth Discipleship*, Palm Desert, CA.

By helping you experience victory and contentment in all of life's difficulties and by approaching relationships and circumstances from a biblical perspective, this book will also prepare you to help others face, deal with, and endure life's deepest problems biblically.

Boston, Thomas. *The Art of Manfishing*, Christian Focus Publications, 1998.

This is truly a Puritan's view of evangelism. First published in 1793, Boston's "scribble" enables the reader to see the duty and art of winning the lost to Jesus Christ. Human nature is so vividly explained and illustrated in this little read from a fine scholar of God's Word.

Bridges, Jerry. *Trusting God, Even When it Hurts*, Colorado Springs: Nave Press, 1988.

Do you find it easy to trust God—until adversity strikes? When life clouds over, do you suddenly begin to suspect that you only imagined His care for you? Bridges uncovers three essential truths about God: He is completely sovereign, He is infinite in wisdom, and He is perfect in love. Building on these three

rocks. Bridges shows how we can learn to trust God, even when we don't understand what He is doing.

Eareckson-Tada, Joni, and Steve Estes. *When God Weeps*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997.

Joni, a quadriplegic for forty plus years after a neck injury in a diving accident as a teenager, shares these words: "This book is not so much truths about suffering as it is about [truths of] God ... not so much about affliction as it is about the only One who can unlock sense out of suffering ... it's Steve's and my prayer that through this book you will better understand why our weeping matters to a loving God. A God who will, one day, make clear the meaning behind every tear."

Fitzpatrick, Elyse. *Idols of the Heart: Learning to Long for God Alone*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishers, 2001.

This book reveals that idolatry lies at the heart of every besetting sin. If you think of idols as stone statues in far-off lands, think again. Idols are the desires, longings, and expectations we worship instead of the true God. Fitzpatrick helps uncover hidden idols by moving us to ask ourselves, "What do I long for so much that my heart demands, 'give me this, lest I die?' What must I have for my life to be meaningful and happy?"

———. *A Steadfast Heart*. Phillipsburg, NY: P & R Publishing, 2006.

Although never our personal choice, it is frequently God's plan that His children walk through storms and difficulties. Using the picture presented in Psalm 57, you can discover the secret of experiencing God's presence and comfort in trials as you grow in your appreciation of His purposes in your life.

Halla, James. *The Plight of Fallen Man*. Stanley, NC: Timeless Texts, 2002.

Here is a book by a physician who is also a counselor. He

emphasizes that there is more to pain than just getting rid of it. There is a biblical response to pain that the believer must be made aware.

Hurding, Roger. *The Tree of Healing*. Zondervan Publishing House. Over the years, I (Mark Graham) have found Hurding's work quite helpful in discerning secular psychologies and in thinking through a Christian response to the contemporary humanistic counseling schools. Hurding also fleshes out several Christian counseling models, including nouthetic counseling, which I find to be insightful but challenging. The challenge for me with Hurding's book (and similar Christian counseling resources) lies in the rigor of good discernment. A case in point can be found in Hurding's affirmation of Richard Lovelace's words, "Biblical truth is not a compendium of all necessary knowledge" (p. 306). In my mind, something in Lovelace's (and Hurding's) view sounds deficient and humanistic without the fuller explanation of an all-sufficient Word from God. This reading, though insightful, begs the good exercise of keen perception and spiritual awareness.

James, Carolyn. *When Life and Beliefs Collide: How Knowing God Makes a Difference*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

If you are a Christian woman, is your theology found in Mary and Martha? Thinking and doing? James weaves together stories of contemporary and biblical women, examining the practical benefits of knowing God deeply—and the misperceptions that discourage you from truly knowing Him. A must-read for women and highly recommended for men!

Kuen, Alfred. *I Will Build My Church*. Moody Press.

This is a good study of the church from a nonconformist view. The reading will especially profit those who dare to resist empty institutionalism and tradition while resolving to

strengthen Christ's church after a biblical pattern. Although I (Mark Graham) do not give a blanket endorsement of Kuen's theology and ideas, the book has inspired conviction for radical obedience when it comes to biblical church life.

Mack, Wayne. *Anger and Stress Management*, Merrick, NY: Calvary Press Publishing, 2004.

Dr. Wayne Mack tells you not just how to handle anger but also how to handle the root causes of anger. By doing this, Dr. Mack helps you to better understand why your reactions to stress and its accompanying anger are usually the result of not getting what you *think* you need. He then goes on to explain how to restructure your thinking to make your reaction more Christ like. If you've ever struggled with anger, if you've ever been so stressed out that you don't know where to turn then this book, saturated with Scriptural principles, can change your life—forever!

———. *Life in the Father's House*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1996. Ideal for new Christians and discipleship groups, this helpful book explains why joining a local Christian fellowship is essential to the spiritual health of every believer. Mack and Swavely's practical discussions on the traits of a good fellowship, leadership, male and female roles, worship, and more provide an excellent Scripturally based overview of the importance of the local Christian community.

———. *Out of the Blues: Dealing with the Blues of Depression and Loneliness*, Focus Publishing.

This book addresses the issue of depression, a problem that nearly everyone faces at some time in his or her life. Using a distinctly biblical perspective, the author defines what depression is and outlines causes and solutions to the blues caused by loneliness. It includes a Q and A section and additional

notes written for counselors, making this a good resource for both those who are seeking help, and those offering help.

Mahanaey, C. J. *The Cross-Centered Life*, Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2002.

This read shows us how to center *everyday* on the cross of Calvary and how to escape the pitfalls of legalism, condemnation, and feelings-driven faith. Keep Jesus' work on your behalf the *main thing*—the central motivation for your life and faith.

———. *Humility—True Greatness*, Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Publishers.

Mahanaey paints a striking picture of the daily battle quietly raging within every Christian and asks whether you will passively accommodate the enemy of your soul—pride, or actively cultivate your best friend—humility. When you acknowledge the deception of pride and intentionally humble yourself, you become free to savor abundant mercies, unlikely graces, and a God glorifying life you won't want to miss.

Peace, Martha. *Attitudes of a Transformed Heart*, Bemidji, Minnesota: Focus Publishing, 2001.

Even Christians too often embrace a low view of God and, consequently, a casual view of sin and Scripture. This mindset bleeds through in the hidden attitudes of the heart.

This book is about being "*transformed by the renewing of your minds*" and not being conformed to the world's thinking (Ro 12:2). If you have a teachable heart, this book will expose wrong assumptions in the penetrating light of God's Word.

Pink, Arthur W. *The Attributes of God*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1975.

Failure to understand God's character leads to a skewed perception of the Divine—one that is too often cast in our own

image. Seeking to remedy this, Pink outlines seventeen key characteristics of the Almighty. Whether for our own spiritual growth or for ministering to counselees, it is imperative that we have a right view of God. Though a small book, it takes us into the presence of God and helps us to realize that we live before the God of Scripture.

Piper, John. *Desiring God*. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 1986.

A rich classic, Piper leads us into a healthy biblical study on Christian motivation. The communion of a longing soul and a satisfying Christ is at the center of God's plan. Join him as he unveils stunning, life-impacting truths you may have seen in the Bible but never dared to believe.

———. *The Pleasures of God*. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Publishers, 2000.

This is a book that simply brings forth the teaching “*It is all about God; He does things for His pleasure. Period.*” Fully understanding the joy of God will draw the reader into an encounter with His overflowing, self-replenishing, all-encompassing grace—the source of living water that all Christians desire to drink. This book will again put God at the center of creation and leave the reader very satisfied in Him.

Sproul, R. C. *The Invisible Hand*. P & R Publishing, 1996.

The hand of providence is in all of life's experience. Here is a superb study in the style of Sproul that will encourage the reader to see God's sovereign purpose in all of life's “random” appearances.

Spurgeon, Charles H. *The Power of Prayer in the Believer's Life*. Lynnwood, Washington: Emerald Books, 1993. Internet accessed, June 25, 2013.

The title says it all from a prince among preachers. These

lessons on prayer should goad the combatant to the priority, privilege, and power of perseverant praying.

Tripp, Paul, and Tim Lane. *How People Change*. New Growth Press, second edition, May 22, 2008.

A changed heart is the bright promise of the Gospels. When the Bible talks about the gift of a new heart, it doesn't mean a heart that is immediately perfected, but a heart that is capable of being changed. Jesus' work on the cross targets our hearts—our core desires and motivations—and when our hearts change, our behavior changes. It is exciting to see the application of familiar Scripture portions come forth in a fresh, applicable way to help us keep a focus that honors God.

Vincent, Milton. *A Gospel Primer for Christians: Learning to See the Glories of God's Love*. The Lockman Foundation, 1960.

Milton learned the hard way that Christians also need the gospel every day to keep us from falling into a performance relationship with God. This book will help you experience the power of the Gospel more consistently. It is literally life changing.

Welch, Ed. *Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2001.

A worship disorder—this is how Edward T. Welch views addictions. “*Will we worship ourselves and our own desires,*” he writes, “*or will we worship the true God?*” Through these lens, the author discovers far more in Scripture on addictions than passages on drunkenness. There we learn the addict's true condition: it is like that of a guest at a banquet thrown by the woman, Folly; he is already in the grave (Prov. 9:13–18). Can we not escape our addictions? If we're willing to follow Jesus, the author says we have “*...immense hope: hope in God's forgiving grace, hope in God's love that is faithful even when we are not, and hope that God can give power so that we are no longer mastered by*

the addiction.” Each chapter concludes with “Practical Theology Guidance,” as “You Face Your Own Addictions,” and “As You Help Someone Else.”

----. *Blame It on the Brain*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1998. Dr. Welch views various “brain problems” through the lens of Scripture in this wonderful book. Ed distinguishes genuine brain disorders from problems rooted in the heart. Understanding the distinction will enable pastors, counselors, families, and friends to help others, or themselves deal with personal struggles. While focusing on a few common disorders, Ed lays out a series of practical steps adaptable to a wide range of conditions, habits, and addictions.

----. *When People Are Big and God Is Small*, Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1997.

This excellent work deals with the idea that people are so desirous of pleasing men that they fail to walk in the fear of God. It is a very introspective book and one that calls for an honest inventory of heart motivations.

Websites for obtaining much of the materials mentioned above and other excellent resources:

Biblical Counseling Foundation:
<bcfministries.org>

Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation:
<cccef.org>

Cumberland Valley Bible Book Service:
<cvbbs.com>

National Association of Nouthetic Counselors:
<nanc.org>

Faith Baptist Church Counseling Ministries:
<fbclayfette.org>

Christian Book Distributors:
<christianbook.com>

Biblical Counseling Strengthening Ministries:
<mackministries.org>

Biblical Counseling Manual:
<ecoin.net/bcbook>

Timeless Texts:
<timelesstexts.com>

Women Helping Women Ministries:
<elysefitzpatrick.com>

Pure Life Ministries:
<purelifeministries.org>

Ministries for Children:<truthquest.net/aboutushome.html>